

# Women's Sacred Circle Guidelines (Practices of "Council Sharing")

(Summarized from the book "Sacred Circles—A guide to creating your own women's spirituality group" by Robin Deen Carnes & Sally Craig. Summary compiled by Amalya 9-16-21 for Goddess Studio circles.)

**In order to help create a safe, supportive, intimate, and trust-building circle, these guidelines are very beneficial while we are sharing:**

## ***WHEN SPEAKING...***

- ◆ **Only one person speaks at a time while others listen.** (We will use a "talking stick" or object to designate the speaker.)
- ◆ **Be mindful of how long you speak** so enough time is available for all to share initially. We can always come around again. Stay focused on your main point without getting carried away into your story.
- ◆ **Give your full attention to the person speaking.** Practice focusing your attention on the speaker without becoming distracted. Listen without an agenda, without assessing and without evaluating or judging the speaker or what she is saying. Practice listening without thinking about what you want to say at your turn.
- ◆ **Speak in the "first person"** when sharing: (ie: speak from the "I"—state your experience as yours. State how YOU feel).
- ◆ **You do not have to share** if you do not want to.
- ◆ **Take responsibility for your own needs.** Ask for what you want. Be aware of your expectations.

## ***WHILE LISTENING...***

- ◆ **Practice listening with quiet empathy** honoring the speaker's "truth".
- ◆ **Please do not interrupt except possibly to clarify** what the woman talking may have just said. (ie: No cross talk —replying or commenting.)
- ◆ **Do not give advice or try to resolve problems** or make interpretations for another, unless someone has asked specifically for "wisdom counsel".
- ◆ **Be non-judgmental.** Do not judge yourself or others for expressed feelings or opinions. It is irrelevant whether or not you agree or disagree with what someone is saying. What matters is that you accept what is being said as her reality. And practice self acceptance of your own expressions too.
- ◆ **Confidentiality.** Anything said in the circle should not be repeated outside the circle unless the person speaking gives permission.
- ◆ **Networking/Soliciting:** in consideration of sacred space, please reserve networking or soliciting to announcement times or for network table.
- ◆ Please do not make direct or indirect inquiries or assumptions about a woman's sexual orientation.